

SPOTLIGHT ON BAHAMAS ACADEMY: “OUR TWIN ASSIGNMENT”

Dr. John Carey, February 23, 2007

The church of God on earth has a divine mandate to engage in the work of redemption. We spare no effort in designing new strategies and programmes that would make us more effective in leading men and women to accept Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. Of equal importance, however, is the role of the church in the education of our children.

History reminds us that formal education in our region was introduced by the Christian church and today many of the churches in our nation are continuing to build on the foundation laid so many years ago. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is one of the nation’s pioneers in education.

As a church, we believe that education must begin in the home where children are taught discipline, and the importance of work, and where the foundation is laid for formal education. Adventists have always “embraced the philosophy that education should be redemptive in nature, for the purpose of restoring human beings to the image of God, our Creator. Mental, physical, social, and spiritual health, intellectual growth, and service to humanity form a core of values that are essential aspects of the Adventist education philosophy.

In the early 1870s, our world church, headquartered in Maryland, USA, developed a school system, and established an Education Department in 1902. Today, we have the largest protestant educational system, with 7,000 schools, colleges and universities, 69,000 teachers, and 1, 337,000 students. The largest Seventh-day Adventist English-speaking university, Northern Caribbean University, is owned and operated by our parent organization, West Indies Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, with headquarters in Mandeville, Jamaica.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church was established in the Bahamas in the late 19th century, and shortly thereafter, became meaningfully engaged in its twin assignment of leading souls to Jesus and the education of our children. The fledgling school began in the Odd Fellows Hall, then moved to Hawkins Hill, and in 1948 was established as the Bahamas Junior Academy on its present six-acre Wulff Road site. (More in subsequent issues)